

AUTUMN.

A

P O E M.

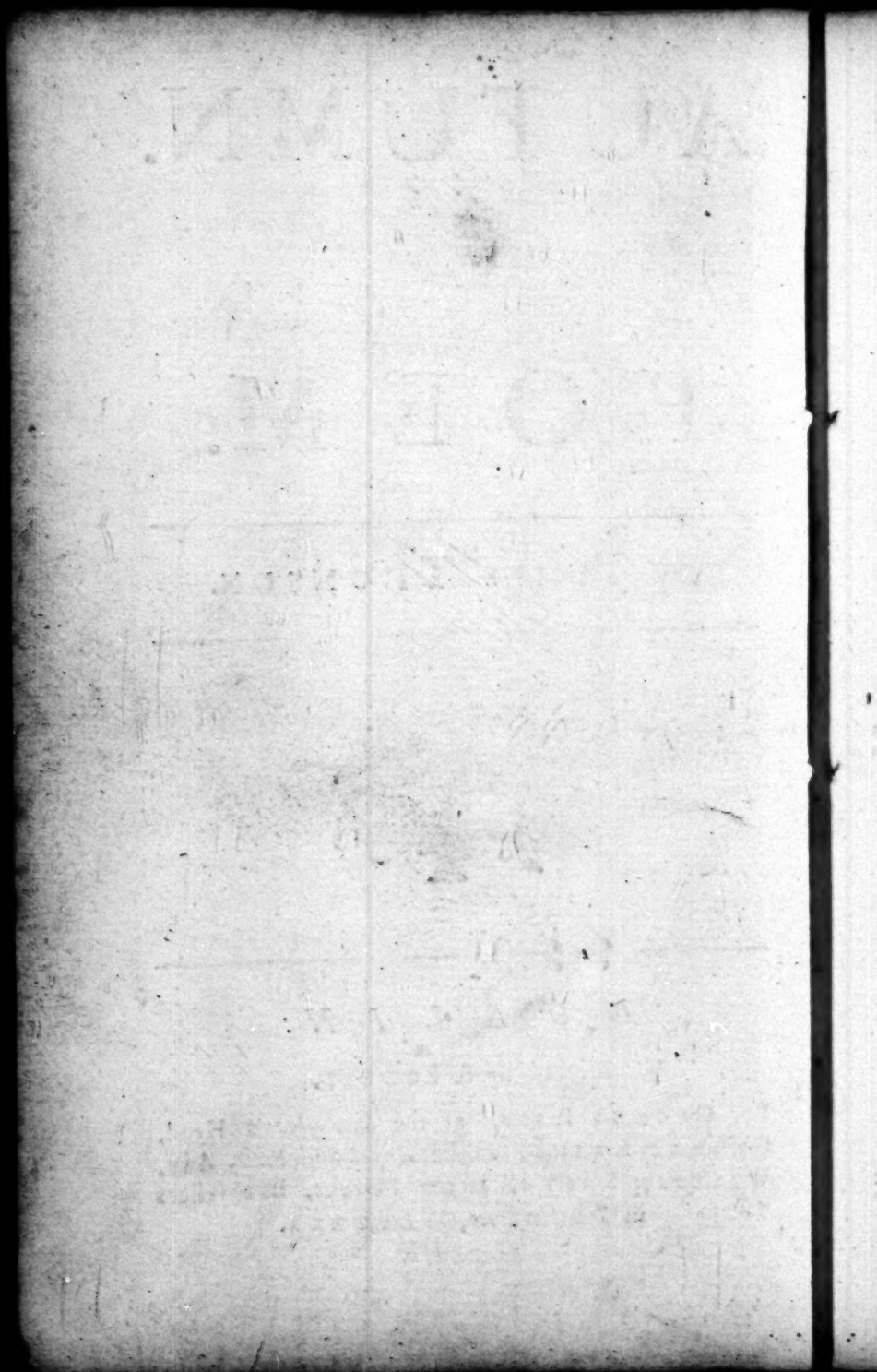
By JAMES THOMSON.



D U B L I N :

Printed by S. POWELL,

For GEORGE RISK, at the *Shakespear's Head*,
GEORGE EWING, at the *Angel and Bible*, And,
WILLIAM SMITH, at the *Hercules*, Booksellers
in *Dame's-street*, M D C C X X X.



AUTUMN.

Inscrib'd to the RIGHT HONOURABLE

ARTH^R. ONSLOW, Esq;

Speaker of the HOUSE OF COMMONS.



The ARGUMENT.

The subject propos'd. Address to Mr. ONSLOW. A prospect of the fields ready for harvest. Reaping. A tale. A harvest storm. Shooting and hunting, their barbarity. A ludicrous account of fox-hunting. A view of an orchard. Wall-fruit. A vineyard. A description of Fogs, frequent in the latter part of AUTUMN: whence a digression, enquiring into the rise of fountains and rivers. Birds of season considered, that now shift their habitation. The prodigious number of them that cover the northern and western Isles of SCOTLAND. Hence a view of the country. A prospect of the discoloured, fading woods. After a gentle dusky day, moon-light. Autumnal Meteors. Morning: to which succeeds a calm, pure, sunshine day, such as usually shuts up the season. The harvest being gathered in, the country dissolv'd in joy. The whole concludes with a panegyrick on a philosophical country life.



AUTUMN.



CROWN'D with the fickle, and the
wheaten sheaf,

While *Autumn*, nodding o'er the yellow
plain,

Comes jovial on ; the doric reed once
more,

Well-pleas'd, I tune. Whate'er the *wintry* frost

Nitrous prepar'd ; the various-blossom'd *Spring*

Put in white promise forth ; and *Summer-Suns*

Concocted strong, rush boundless now to view,

Full, perfect all, and swell my glorious theme.

Onflow ! the muse, ambitious of thy name,
To grace, inspire, and dignify her song,

Would from the *public voice* thy gentle ear
 A While engage. Thy noble cares she knows,
 The patriot-virtues that diffend thy Thought,
 Spread on thy Front, and in thy conduct glow;
 While listening senates hang upon thy tongue, 15
 Devolving thro' the maze of eloquence
 A rowl of periods, sweeter than her song.
 But she too pants for public virtue, she,
 Tho' weak of power, yet strong in ardent will,
 Whene'er her Country rushes on her heart, 20
 Assumes a bolder note, and fondly tries
 To mix the patriot's with the poet's flame.

When the bright *Virgin* gives the beauteous days,
 And *Libra* weighs in equal scales the year;
 From heaven's high cope the fierce effulgence shook 25
 Of parting *Summer*, a serener blue,
 With golden light irradiate, wide invests
 The happy World. Attemper'd suns arise,
 Sweet-beam'd, and shedding off thro' lucid clouds
 A pleasing calm; while broad, and brown, below, 30
 Unbounded harvests hang the heavy head.
 Rich, silent, deep, they stand; for not a gale
 Rolls its light billows o'er the bending plain;

A calm of plenty ! till the ruffled air
 Falls from its poise, and gives the breeze to blow. 35
 Rent is the fleecy Mantle of the sky ;
 The clouds fly different ; and the sudden sun
 By fits effulgent gilds th' illumin'd field,
 And black by fits the shadows sweep along.
 A gayly checker'd, wide-extended view, 40
 Far as the circling eye can shoot around,
 Convolv'd, and tossing in a flood of corn.

These are thy blessings *Industry* ! rough Power !
 Whom Labour still attends, and Sweat, and Pain ;
 Yet the kind source of every gentleart, 45
 And all the soft civility of life :
 Raifer of human kind ! by *Nature* cast,
 Naked, and helpless, out amid the woods,
 And wilds, to rude inclement elements ;
 With various powers of deep efficiency 50
 Implanted, and profusely pour'd around
 Materials infinite ; but idle all.
 Still unexerted, in th' unconscious breast,
 Slept the lethargic powers ; Corruption still,
 Voracious, swallow'd what the liberal hand 55

Of

Of *Bounty* scatter'd o'er the savage year.
 And still the sad barbarian, roving, mix'd
 With beasts of prey; or for his acron-meal
 Fought the fierce tusky boar: a shivering wretch!
 Aghast, and comfortless, when the red north, 60
 With winter charg'd, let the mixt tempest fly,
 Hail, rain, and snow, and bitter-breathing frost.
 Then to the shelter of the hut he fled;
 And the wild season, fordid, pin'd away.
 For home he had not; home is the resort 65
 Of love, of joy, of peace, and plenty, where,
 Supporting and supported, polish'd friends,
 And dear relations mingle into bliss.
 But this the rugged savage never felt,
 Even desolate in crouds; and thus his days 70
 Roll'd heavy, dark, and unenjoy'd along:
 A waste of time! till *Industry* approach'd,
 And rous'd him from his miserable sloth;
 His faculties unfolded; pointed out,
 Where lavish *Nature* the directing hand 80
 Of *Art* demanded; shew'd him how to raise
 His feeble force by the mechanic powers,
 To dig the mineral from the vaulted earth,
 On what to turn the piercing rage of fire,

A U T U M N.

3

On what the torrent, and the gather'd blast ; 85

Gave the tall antient forest to his ax ;

Taught him to chip the wood, and hew the stone,

Till by degrees the finish'd fabric rose ;

Tore from his Limbs the blood-polluted fur,

And wrapt them in the woolly vestment warm, 90

Or bright in glossy silk, and flowing lawn ;

With wholesome viands fill'd his table pour'd

The generous glass around, inspir'd to wake

The life-refining Soul of decent wit :

Nor stopt at barren, bare necessity ; 95

But still advancing bolder, led him on,

By hardy patience, and experience slow,

To pomp, to pleasure, elegance, and grace ;

And breathing high ambition thro' his soul,

Set science, wisdom, glory in his view, 100

And bad him be the *Lord* of all below.

Then gathering men their natural pow'rs combin'd,

And form'd a *Public* ; to the general good

Submitting, aiming, and conducting all.

For this the *Patriot-Council* met, the full, 105

The free, and fairly represented *Whole* ;

For this devis'd the holy guardian laws,

Df-

Distinguish'd orders, animated Arts,
 And with joint force *Oppression* chaining, set
Imperial Justice at the helm; yet still 110
 To them accountable: nor slavish dream'd
 That toiling millions must resign their weal,
 And all the honey of their search, to such
 As for themselves alone themselves have rais'd.

Hence every form of cultivated life 115
 In order set, protected, and inspir'd,
 Into perfection wrought. Uniting all,
 Society grew numerous, high, polite,
 And happy. Nurse of art! the city rose;
 And stretching street on street by thousands led, 120
 From twining woody haunts, and the tough yew
 To bows strong-straining, her aspiring sons.
 'Twas nought but labour, the whole dusky grouse
 Of clustering houses, and of mingling men,
 Restless design, and execution strong. 125
 In every street the sounding hammer ply'd
 His massy task; while the corrosive file,
 In flying touches, form'd the fine machine.

Then

A U T U M N.

11

Then *Commerce* brought into the public walk
 The busy Merchant; the big ware-house built; 130
 Rais'd the strong crane; choak'd up the loaded street
 With foreign plenty; and on thee, thou *Thames*,
 Large, gentle, deep, majestic, king of floods!
 Than whom no river heaves a fuller tide,
 Seiz'd for his grand resort. On either hand, 135
 Like a long wint'ry forest, groves of masts
 Shot up their spires; bellying the sheet between
 Possess'd the breezy void; the footy hulk
 Steer'd sluggish on; the splendid barge along
 Row'd, regular, to harmony; around, 140
 The boat, light-skimming, stretch'd its oary wings;
 While deep the various voice of fervent toil
 From bank to bank increas'd; whence ribb'd with oak,
 To bear the *British* thunder, black and bold,
 The roaring vessel rush'd into the main. 145

Then too the pillar'd dome, magnific, heav'd
 His ample roof; and *Luxury* within
 Pour'd out her glittering stores. The canvas smooth,
 With glowing life protuberant to the view
 Embodied rose. The statue seem'd to breathe, 150
 And

And soften into flesh beneath the touch
Of forming art, imagination-flush'd,

All is the gift of *Industry*; whate'er
Exalts, embellishes, and renders life
Delightful. Pensive *Winter* cheer'd by him 155
Sits at the social fire, and happy hears
Th' excluded tempest idly rave along.
His harden'd fingers deck the gaudy *Spring*.
Without him *Summer* were an arid waste;
Nor to th' *autumnal* months could thus transmit 160
These full, mature, immeasurable stores,
That, waving round, recal my wandering song.

Soon as the morning trembles o'er the sky,
And, unperceiv'd, unfolds the spreading day;
Before the ripen'd field the reapers stand, 165
In fair array; each by the lass he loves,
To bear the rougher part and mitigate
By nameless gentle offices her toil.
At once they stoop, and swell the lustrous sheaves;
While, bandied round and round, the rural talk, 170
The rural scandal, and the rural jest
Fly hearty to deceive the tedious time,

And

And chearly steal the sultry hours away.
 Behind the master walks, builds up the shocks;
 And, conscious, glancing oft this way and that 175
 His fated eye, feels his heart heave with joy.

The gleaners spread around, and here and there,
 Spike after spike their sparing harvest pick.
 Be not too narrow, husband-men! but fling
 From the full sheaf, with charitable stealth, 180

The liberal handful. Think, oh grateful think!
 How good the *God* of harvest is to you;
 Who pours abundance o'er your flowing fields;
 While these unhappy partners of your kind
 Wide-hover round you like the fowls of heaven, 185
 And ask their humble dole. The various turns
 Of fortune ponder; that your sons may want
 What now, with hard reluctance, faint, ye give.

The lovely young *Lavinia* once had friends;
 And fortune smil'd, deceitful, on her birth. 190
 For in her helpless years depriv'd of all,
 Of every stay, save innocence and *Heaven*,
 She with her widow'd mother, feeble, old,
 And poor, liv'd in a cottage lost far up
 Amid the windings of a woody vale; 195

Safe

Safe from the cruel blasting arts of man;
 Almost on *Nature's* common bounty fed,
 Like the gay birds that sung them to repose,
 Content, and careless of to-morrow's fare.
 Her form was fresher than the morning-rose, 200
 When the dew wets its leaves; unstain'd, and pure,
 As is the lilly, or the mountain snow.
 The modest virtues mingled in her eyes,
 Still on the ground deject, and darting all
 Their humid beams into the blooming flowers: 205
 Or when the stories that her mother told,
 Of what her faithless fortune flatter'd once,
 Thrill'd in her thought, they like the dewy star
 Of evening, shone in tears. A native grace
 Sat fair-proportion'd on her polish'd limbs, 210
 Veil'd in a simple robe; for loveliness
 Needs not the foreign aid of ornament,
 But is when unadorn'd adorn'd the most.
 Thoughtless of beauty, she was beauty's self,
 Recluse among the Woods; if city-dames 215
 Will deign their faith. And thus she went compell'd
 By strong necessity, with as serene,
 And pleas'd a look as patience can put on,
 To glean *Palamon's* fields. The pride of swains

Palamon was, the generous, and the rich, 220

Who led the rural life in all its joy,

And elegance, such as *Arcadian* song

Transmits from ancient, incorrupted times;

When tyrant custom had not shackled man,

And free to follow nature was the mode. 225

He then, his fancy with autumnal scenes

Amusing, chanc'd beside his reaper-train

To walk, when poor *Lavinia* drew his eye;

Unconscious of her power, and turning quick

With unaffected blushes from his gaze. 230

He saw her charming, but he saw not half

The charms her down-cast modesty conceal'd.

That very moment love and chaste desire

Sprung in his bosom, to himself unknown;

For still the world prevail'd, and its dread laugh 235

Which scarce the firm philosopher can scorn,

Should his heart own a gleaner in the field:

And thus in secret to his soul he sigh'd.

What pity! that so delicate a form,

By beauty kindled, and harmonious shap'd, 240

Where sense sincere, and goodness seem'd to dwell,

Should be devoted to the rude embrace

Of

Of some indecent clown ? She looks, methinks,
 Of old *Acasto's* line ; and to my mind
 Recals that patron of my happy life, 245
 From whom my liberal fortune took its rise ;
 Now to the dust gone down ; his houses, lands,
 And once fair-spredding family dissolv'd.
 I've heard that, in some waste obscure retreat,
 Urg'd by remembrance sad, and decent pride, 250
 Far from those scenes which knew their better days,
 His aged widow and his daughter live ;
 Whom yet my fruitless search could never find.
 Romantick wish, would this the daughter were !

When, strict enquiring, from herself he found 255
 She was the same, the daughter of his friend,
 The bountiful *Acasto* ; who can speak
 The mingling passion that surpriz'd his heart,
 And thro' his nerves in shivering transport ran ?
 Then blaz'd his smother'd flame, avow'd, and bold ; 260
 And as he run her, ardent, o'er and o'er,
 Love, gratitude, and pity wept at once.
 Confus'd, and frighten'd at his sudden tears,
 Her rising beauties flush'd a higher bloom,

As

As thus *Palamon*, passionate, and just,
 Pour'd out the pious rapture of his soul.

265

And art thou then *Acasto*'s dear remains?
 She, whom my restless gratitude has sought
 So long in vain? Oh yes! the very same,
 The soften'd image of my noble friend,
 Alive, his every feature, every look,
 More elegantly touch'd. Fairer than spring!
 Thou sole surviving blossom from the root,
 That nourish'd up my fortune, say, ah where,
 In what unsmiling desert, hast thou drawn
 The kindest aspect of delighted heaven?
 Into such beauty spread? and blown so white?

270

275

Tho' poverty's cold wind, and crushing rain,
 Beat keen, and heavy, on thy tender years.

O let me now, into a richer soil,

280

Transplant thee safe! where vernal suns, and showers,

Diffuse their warmest, largest influence;

And of my garden be the pride, and joy!

It ill befits thee, oh it ill befits

Acasto's daughter, his, whose open stores,

285

Tho' vast, were little to his ampler heart,

The Father of a country, thus to pick

B

The

The very refuse of those harvest-fields,
 His bounty taught to gain, and right enjoy.
 Then throw that shameful pittance from thy hand, 290
 But ill apply'd to such a rugged task;
 With harvest shining all these fields are thine;
 And, if my wishes may presume so far,
 Their master too, who then indeed were blest,
 To make the daughter of *Acasto* so. 295

Here ceas'd the youth : yet still his speaking eye
 Express'd the sacred triumph of his soul,
 With conscious virtue, gratitude, and love,
 Above the vulgar joy divinely rais'd.
 Nor waited he reply. Won by the charm 300
 Of goodness irresistible, and all
 In sweet disorder lost, she blush'd consent.
 The news immediate to her mother brought,
 While, pierc'd with anxious thought, she pin'd away
 The lonely Moments for *Lavinia's* fate; 305
 Amaz'd, and scarce believing what she heard,
 Joy seiz'd her wither'd veins, and one bright gleam
 Of setting life shone on her evening-hours :
 Not less enraptur'd than the happy pair ;
 Who flourish'd long in mutual bliss, and rear'd 310

A numerous offspring, lovely like themselves,
And good, the grace of all the country round.

Defeating oft the labours of the year,
The sultry south collects a potent blast.

At first, the groves are scarcely seen to stir 315

Their trembling tops; and a still murmur runs

Along the soft-inclining fields of corn.

But as th' aerial tempest fuller swells;

And in one mighty stream, invisible,

Immense, the whole excited atmosphere, 320

Impetuous rushes o'er the sounding world;

Strain'd to the root, the stooping forest pours

A rustling shower of yet untimely leaves.

High-beat, the circling mountains eddy in,

From the bare wild, the dissipated storm, 325

And send it in a torrent down the vale.

Expos'd, and naked, to its utmost rage,

Thro' all the sea of harvest rolling round,

The billowy plain boils wide; nor can evade,

Tho' plyant to the blast, its seizing force; 330

Or whirl'd in air, or into vacant chaff

Shook waste. And sometimes too a burst of rain,

Swept from the black horizon, broad, descends

In one continuous flood. Still over head
 The glomerating tempest glows, and still 335
 The deluge deepens; till the fields around
 Lie sunk, and flatted, in the sordid wave.
 Sudden the ditches swell; the meadows swim.
 Red, from the hills, innumerable streams
 Tumultuous roar; and high above its banks 340
 The river lift; before whose weighty rush,
 Herds, flocks, and harvests, cottages, and swains,
 Roll mingled down; all that the winds had spar'd,
 In one wild moment ruin'd, the big hopes,
 And well-earn'd treasures of the painful year. 345
 Fled to some eminence, the husbandman,
 Helpless beholds the miserable wreck
 Driving along; his drowning ox at once
 Descending, with his labours scatter'd round,
 He sees; and instant o'er his shivering thought 350
 Comes winter unprovided, and a train
 Of clamant children dear. Ye masters, then
 Be mindful of the rough laborious hand,
 That sinks you soft in elegance, and ease;
 Be mindful of those limbs, in russet clad, 355
 Whose toil to yours is warmth, and graceful pride;
 And oh be mindful of that sparing board,
 Which

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Which covers yours with luxury profuse,
Makes your glass sparkle, and your sense rejoice!
Nor cruelly demand what the deep rains,
And all-involving winds have swept away.

360

Here the rude clamour of the sportsman's joy,
The gun thick-thundering, and the winded horn,
Would tempt the mule to sing the *rural game*.

How, in his mid-career, the spaniel struck,

365

Stiff, by the tainted gale, with open nose,
Out-stretch'd, and finely sensible, draws full,

Fearful and cautious, on the latent prey;

As in the fun the circling covey bask

Their varied plumes, watchful and every way

370

Thro' the rough stubble turn'd the secret eye.

Caught in the meshy snare, in vain they beat

Their useless wings, intangled more and more;

Nor on the surges of the boundless air,

Tho' borne triumphant, are they safe; the gun,

375

Glanc'd just, and sudden, from the fowler's eye,

O'ertakes their sounding pinions; and again,

Immediate, brings them from the towering wing,

Dead to the ground; or drives them else dispers'd,

Wounded, and wheeling various, down the wind.

380

B 3

These

These are not subjects for the peaceful muse,
 Nor will she stain her spotless theme with such;
 Then most delighted, when she smiling sees
 The whole mix'd animal creation round
 Alive, and happy. 'Tis not joy to her; 385
 This falsely chearful, barbarous game of death;
 This rage of pleasure, which the restless youth
 Awakes, impatient, with the gleaming morn;
 When beasts of prey retire, that all night long,
 Urg'd by necessity, had roam'd the dark; 390
 As if their conscious ravage shunn'd the light,
 Asham'd. Not so the steady tyrant man,
 Who with the thoughtless insolence of power
 Inflam'd, beyond the most inturiate rage
 Of the worst monster that e'er howl'd the waste, 395
 For sport alone takes up the cruel tract,
 Amid the beamings of the gentle days.
 Upbraid us not, ye wolves! ye tygers' fell!
 For hunger kindles you, and lawless want;
 But lavish fed, in Nature's bounty roll'd, 400
 To laugh at anguish, and rejoice in blood,
 Is what your horrid bosoms never knew.

Poor is the Triumph o'er the timid Hare!

Shook from the corn, and now to some lone seat

Retir'd: the russhy fen; the ragged furz, 405

Stretch'd o'er the stony heath; the stubble chapt;

The thistly lawn; the thick, intangled broom;

Of the same friendly hue, the wither'd fern;

The fallow ground laid open to the sun,

Concoctive; and the nodding sandy bank, 410

Hung o'er the mazes of the mountain-brook.

Vain is her best precaution; tho' she sits

By nature rais'd to take th' horizon in;

And head couch'd close betwixt her hairy feet,

In act to spring away. The scented dew 415

Betrays her early labyrinth; and deep,

In scatter'd, fullen openings, far behind,

With every breeze she hears the coming storm.

But nearer, and more frequent, as it loads

The sighing gale, she springs amaz'd, and all 420

The savage soul of game is up at once:

The pack full-opening, various; the shrill Horn,

Resounded from the hills; the neighing steed,

Wild for the chace; and the loud hunter's shout;

O'er a weak, harmless, flying creature, all 425

Mix'd in mad tumult, and discordant joy.

The Stag too, singled from the herd, where long
 He rang'd the branching monarch of the shades,
 Before the tempest drives. At first in speed,
 He, sprightly, puts his faith; and, fear-arous'd, 430
 Gives all his swift, aerial soul to flight.
 Against the breeze he darts, that way the more
 To leave the lessening murderous cry behind.
 Deception short! tho' fleetier than the winds
 Blown o'er the keen-air'd mountain by the north, 435
 He bursts the thickets, glances thro' the glades,
 And plunges deep into the wildest wood.
 It slow, yet sure, adhesive to the tract
 Hot-steaming, up behind him comes again
 Th' inhuman rout, and from the shady depth 440
 Expel him, circling thro' his every shift.
 He sweeps the forest oft; and sobbing sees
 The glades, mild-opening to the golden day;
 Where, in kind contest, with his butting friends
 He went to struggle, or his loves enjoy. 445
 Oft in the full-descending flood he tries
 To lose the scent, and lave his burning sides;
 Oft seeks the herd; the watchful herd alarm'd,
 With quick consent, avoid th' infectious maze,
 What shall he do? his once so vivid nerves, 450
 So

So full of buoyant soul, inspire no more
 The fainting course; but wrenching, breathless toil,
 Sick, seizes on his heart: he stands at bay;
 And puts his last weak refuge in despair.
 The big round tears run down his dappled face; 445
 He groans in anguish; while the growling pack,
 Blood-happy, hang at his fair, jutting chest,
 And mark his beauteous chequer'd sides with gore.

Of this enough. But if the filvan youth
 Whose fervent blood boils into violence, 460
 Must have the chace; behold, despising flight,
 Therous'd-up lyon, resolute, and slow,
 Advancing full on the protended spear,
 And coward-band, that circling wheel aloof.
 Slunk from the cavern, and the troubled wood, 465
 See the grim wolf; on him his shaggy foe
 Vindictive fix, for murder is his trade:
 And, growling horrid, as the brindled boar
 Grins near destruction, to the monster's heart
 Let the dart lighten from the nervous arm. 470

These Britain knows not; give, ye Britons, then
 Your sportive fury, pitylefs, to pour

Loose

Loose on the sly destroyer of the flock,
 Him, from his craggy winding haunts unearth'd,
 Let all the thunder of the chace pursue. 475
 Thro' the broad ditch behind you; o'er the hedge
 High-bound, resistless; nor the deep morass
 Refuse, but thro' the shaking wilderness
 Pick your nice way; into the perilous flood
 Bear fearless, of the raging instinct full; 480
 And as you ride the torrent, to the banks
 Your triumph sound sonorous, running round,
 From rock to rock, in circling echo tost;
 Then snatch the mountains by their woody tops;
 Rush down the dangerous steep; and o'er the lawn, 485
 In fancy swallowing up the space between,
 Pour all your speed into the rapid game.
 For happy he? who tops the wheeling chace;
 Has every maze evolv'd, and every guile
 Disclos'd; who knows the merits of the pack; 490
 Who saw the villain seiz'd, and dying hard,
 Without complaint, tho' by an hundred mouths
 At once tore, merciless. Thrice happy he!
 At hour of dusk, while the retreating horn
 Calls them to ghostly halls of grey renown, 495
 With woodland honours grac'd; the fox's fur,

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27

Depending decent from the roof ; and spread
Round the drear walls, with antick figures fierce,
The stag's large front: he then is loudest heard,
When the night staggers with severer toils;
And their repeated wonders shake the dome.

500

But first the fuel'd chimney blazes wide ;
The tankards foam ; and the strong table groans
Beneath the smoaking firloin, stretch'd immense
From side to side ; on which, with fell intent,
They deep incision make, and talk the while
Of *England's* glory, ne'er to be defac'd,
While hence they borrow vigour : or amain
Into the pasty plung'd, at intervals,
It stomach keen can intervals allow,
Relating how it ran, and how it fell.

505

510

Then fated Hunger bids his brother Thirst
Produce the mighty bowl ; the mighty bowl,
Swell'd high with fiery juice, steams liberal round
A potent gale, reviving as the breath
Of *Maia*, to the love-sick shepherds,
On violets diffus'd, while soft she hears
Her panting shepherd stealing to her arms.
Nor wanting is the brown october, drawng,

515

Ma-

Mature, and perfect, from his dark retreat 520
 Of thirty years; and now his honest front
 Flames in the light refulgent, nor asham'd
 To vie it with the vineyard's best produce.
 Perhaps a while, amusive, thoughtful Whisk
 Walks gentle round, beneath a cloud of smoak, 525
 Wreath'd, fragrant from the pipe; or the quick dice,
 In thunder leaping from the box, awake
 The sounding gammon: while romp-loving misfs
 Is haul'd about, in gallantry robust.

At last these puling idleneffes laid
 Aside, frequent, and full, the dry divan 530
 Close in firm circle; and set, ardent, in
 For serious drinking. Nor evasion fly,
 Nor sober shift is to the puking wretch
 Indulg'd askew; but earnest, brimming bowls
 Lave every soul, the table floating round,
 And pavement, faithless to the fuddled foot.
 Thus as they swim in mutual swill, the talk,
 Vociferate at once by twenty tongues,
 Reels fast from theme to theme; from horses, hounds, 540
 To church, or mistress, politicks, or ghost,
 In endless mazes, intricate, perplex.

Mean

Mean-time, with sudden interruption, loud,
 Th' impatient catch burst from the joyous heart.
 That moment touch'd is every kindred soul; 545
 And, opening in a full-mouth'd Cry of joy,
 The laugh, the flap, the jocund curse goes round;
 While, from their slumbers shook, the kennel'd hounds
 Mix in the music of the day again.
 As when the tempest, that has vex'd the deep 550
 The dark night long, falls murmuring towards morn;
 So their mirth gradual sinks. Their feeble tongues,
 Unable to take up the cumbrous word,
 Lie quite dissolv'd. Before their maudlin eyes, 555
 Seen dim, and blue, the double tapers dance,
 Like the sun wading thro' the misty sky.
 Then, sliding sweet, they drop. O'erturn'd above
 Lies the wet, broken scene; and stretch'd below,
 Each way, the drunken slaughter; where astride 560
 The lubber Power himself triumphant sits,
 Slumbrous, inclining still from side to side,
 And sleeps them, silent all, in sleep till morn.

But if the rougher sex by this red sport
 Are hurry'd wild, let not such horrid joy
 E'er stain the bosom of the *British Fair*.

565

Far

Far be the spirit of the chace from them !
 Uncomely courage, unbeseeming skill,
 To spring the fence, to rein the prancing steed,
 The cap, the whip, the masculine attire,
 In which they roughen to the sense, and all ; 570
 The winning softness of their sex is lost.
 Made up of blushes, tendernefs, and fears,
 In them 'tis graceful to dissolve at woe ;
 With every motion, every word, to wave
 Quick o'er the kindling cheek the ready blush ; 575
 And from the smallest violence to shrink,
 Unequal, then the loveliest in their fears ;
 And by this silent adulation, soft,
 To their protection more engaging man,
 O may their Eyes no miserable sight, 580
 Save weeping lovers, see ! a nobler game,
 Thro' loves enchanting wiles pursu'd, yet fled,
 In chace ambiguous. May their tender limbs
 Float in the loose simplicity of dress !
 And fashion'd all to harmony, alone, 585
 Know they to seize the captivated soul,
 In rapture warbled from the radiant lip ;
 To teach the lute to languish ; with smooth step,
 Disclosing motion in its every charm,

AUTUMN.

31

To swim along, and swell the mazy dance; 590
 To train the foliage o'er the snowy lawn;
 To play the pencil, turn th' instructive page;
 To give new flavour to the fruitful year,
 And heighten Nature's dainties; in their race
 To rear their graces into second life; 595
 To give society its highest taste;
 Well-order'd home man's best delight to make;
 And by submissive wisdom, modest skill,
 Withevery kinder, care-clusive art,
 To raise the glory, animate the joys, 600
 And sweeten all the toils of human life;
 This be the female dignity and praise.

Ye swains, now hasten to the hazel-bank;
 Where, down yon dale, the wildy-winding-brook
 Falls hoarse from steep to steep. In close array 605
 Fit for the thickets, and the tangling shrub,
 Ye virgins, come. For you their latest song
 The woodlands raise; the cluster'd nut for you
 The lover finds amid the secret shade;
 Or, where they burnish on the topmost bough, 610
 With active vigour crushes down the tree;
 Or shakes them ripe from the resigning husk,

A

A glossy shower, and of an ardent brown,
As are the ringlets of *Melinda's* hair :

Minda form'd with every grace compleat, 615
Yet these neglecting, above beauty wise,
And far transcending such a vulgar praise.

Hence from the busy, joy-refounding fields,
In cheerful error, let us tread the maze
Of *Autumn*, unconfin'd; and vital taste 620
The breath of orchard big with bending fruit.
Obedient to the breeze, and beating ray,
From the deep-loaded bough a mellow shower,
Incessant melts away. The juicy pear
Lies, in a soft profusion, scatter'd round, 625
A various sweetness swells the gentle race;
In species different, but in kind the same,
By *Nature's* all-refining hand prepar'd,
Of temper'd sun, and water, earth, and air,
In ever-changing composition mixt. 630
So fares it with those wide projected heaps
Of apples, which the lusty-handed year,
Innumeros, o'er the blushing orchard shakes.
A various spirit, fresh, delicious, keen,
Dwells in their gelid pores; and, active, points 635
The

The piercing cyder for the thrifty tongue :
 Thy native theme, and boon inspirer too,
Phillips, facetious bard, the second thou
 Who nobly durst, in rhyme-unfetter'd verse,
 With *British* freedom sing the *British* song ; 640
 How, from *Silurian* vats, high-sparkling wines
 Foam in transparent floods; some strong, to cheer
 The wintry revels of the labouring hind;
 And tasteful some, to cool the summer-hours.

In this glad season, while his last, best beams 645
 The sun shedsequal o'er the meeken'd day;
 Oh lose me in the green, majestic walks
 Ot, *Dodington*! thy seat, serene, and plain;
 Where simple Nature reigns; and every view,
 Diffusive, spreads the pure *Dorsetian* downs, 650
 In boundless prospect, yonder shagg'd with wood;
 Here rich with harvest; and there white with flocks.
 Mean time the grandeur of thy lofty dome,
 Far-splendid, seizes on the ravish'd eye.
 New beauties rise with each revolving day; 655
 New columns swell; and still the fresh spring finds
 New plants to quicken, and new groves to green.
 Full of thy genius all! the muses seat;

Where in the secret bow'r, and winding walk
 They twine the bay for thee. Here oft alone, 660
 Fir'd by the thirst of thy applause, I court
 Th' inspiring breeze; and meditate the book
 Of *Nature*, ever open; aiming thence,
 Heart-taught like thine, to learn the moral song.
 And, as I steal along, the sunny wall, 665
 Where *Autumn* basks, with Fruit empurpled deep,
 My theme still urges in my vagrant thought;
 Presents the downy peach; the purple plumb,
 With a fine bluish mist of animals
 Clouded; the ruddy nectarine; and dark, 670
 Beneath his ample leaf the luscious fig.
 The vine too here her curling tendrils shoots;
 Hangs out her clusters, swelling to the south;
 And scarcely wishes for a warmer sky.

Turn we a moment *Fancy's* rapid flight 675
 To vigorous soils, and climes of fair extent;
 Where, by the potent sun elated high,
 The vineyard heaves refulgent on the day;
 Spreads o'er the vale; or up the mountain climbs,
 Profuse; and drinks amid the sunny rocks, 680
 From cliff to cliff encreas'd, the heighten'd blaze.

Low

Low bend the gravid boughs. The clusters clear,
 Half thro' the foliage seen, or ardent flame,
 Or shine transparent; while perfection breathes
 White o'er the turgent film the living dew.

685

As thus they brighten with exalted juice,
 Touch'd into flavour by the mingling ray;
 The rural youth and virgins o'er the field,
 Each fond for each to cull th' autumnal prime,
 Exulting rove, and speak the vintage nigh.

690

Then comes the crushing swain; the country floats,
 And foams unbounded with the mashy flood;
 That by degrees fermented, and refin'd,
 Round the rais'd nations pours the cup of joy
 The Claret smooth, deep as the lip we press,
 In sparkling fancy, while we drain the bowl;
 The mellow-tasted Burgundy; and quick,
 As is the wit it gives, the bright Champaign.

695

Now by the cool, declining year condens'd,
 Descend the copious exhalations, check'd
 As up the middle sky unseen they stole,
 And roll the doubling fogs around the hill.
 No more the mountain, horrid, vast, sublime,
 Who pours a sweep of rivers from his sides;

700

And deep betwixt contending kingdoms lays 705
 The rocky, long division ; while aloft,
 His piny top is, lessening, lost in air :
 No more his thousand prospects fill the view
 With great variety ; but in a night
 Of gathering vapour, from the baffled sense, 710
 Sink dark, and total. Nor alone immerst ;
 The huge dusk, gradual, swallows up the plain.
 Vanish the woods. The dim-seen river seems
 Sullen, and slow, to rowl the misty wave.
 Even in the height of noon oppress'd, the sun 715
 Sheds weak, and blunt, his wide-refracted ray ;
 Whence glaring oft with many a broaden'd orb
 He frights the nations. Indistinct on earth,
 Seen thro' the turbid air, beyond the life,
 Objects appear ; and, wilder'd, o'er the waste, 720
 The shepherd stalks gigantic. Till at last
 Wreath'd close around, in deeper circles still
 Successive floating, Sits the general fog
 Unbounded o'er the world ; and mingling thick,
 A formless, grey confusion covers all. 725
 As when of old (so sung the *hebrew* bard)
 Light, uncollected, thro' the Chaos urg'd

Its

Its infant way; nor Order yet had drawn
His endless train forth from the dubious gloom.

These roving mists, that constant now begin 730
To smooke along the hilly country, these,
With mighty rains, the skill'd in nature say,
The mountain-cisterns fill, those grand reserves
Of water, scoop'd among the hollow rocks;
Whence gush the streams, the ceaseless fountains play, 735
And their unfailing stores the rivers draw.
But is this equal to the vast effect?
Is thus the *Volga* fill'd? the rapid *Rhine*?
The broad *Euphrates*? all the unnumber'd floods,
That large refresh the fair-divided earth; 740
And, in the rage of summer, never cease
To send a thundering torrent to the main?

What tho' the sun draws from the steaming deep
More than the rivers pour? How much again,
O'er the vext surge, in bitter-driving showers, 745
Frequent returns, let the wet sailor say:
And on the thirsty down, far from the burst
Of springs, how much, to their reviving fields,
And feeding flocks, let lonely shepherds sing.

But sure 'tis no weak, variable cause, 750
 That keeps at once ten thousand thousand floods,
 Wide-wandering o'er the world, so fresh, and clear,
 For ever flowing, and for ever full.
 And thus some sages, deep-exploring, teach :
 That, where the hoarse, innumerable wave, 755
 Eternal, lashes the resounding shore;
 Suck'd thro' the sandy *Stratum*, every way,
 The waters with the sandy *Stratum* rise ;
 Amid whose angles infinitely strain'd,
 They leave each saline particle behind, 760
 And clear, and sweeten, as they soak along,
 Nor stops the restless fluid, mounting still,
 Tho' here and there in lowly plains it springs,
 But to the mountain courted by the sand,
 That leads it darkling on in faithful maze, 765
 Far from the parent-main, it boils again
 Fresh into day ; and all the glittering hill
 Is bright with spouting rills. The vital stream
 Hence, in its subterranean passage, gains,
 From the wash'd mineral, that restoring power ; 770
 And salutary virtue, which anew
 Strings every nerve, calls up the kindling soul
 Into the healthful cheek, and joyous eye ;

And

And whence, the royal maid, *Amelia* blooms
 With new-flush'd graces; yet reserv'd to bless, 775
 Beyond a crown, some happy prince; and shine,
 In all her mother's matchless virtues drest,
 The *Carolina* of another land.

While *Autumn* scatters his departing gleams,
 Warn'd of approaching winter, gather'd, play 780
 The swallow-people; and toft wide around,
 O'er the calm sky, in convulsion swift,
 The feather'd eddy floats. Rejoycing once,
 E're to their wintry slumbers they retire;
 In clusters clung, beneath the mouldering bank, 785
 And where the cavern sweats, as fages dream,
 Or rather into warmer climes convey'd,
 With other kindred birds of season, there
 They twitter cheerful, till the vernal months
 Invite them welcome back: for, thronging, now 790
 Innumeros wings are in commotion all.

Where the *Rhine* loses his majestic force
 In *Belgian* plains, won from the raging deep
 By diligence amazing, and the strong,
 Unconquerable hand of *Liberty*, 795

The stork-assembly meets; for many a day,
 Consulting deep, and various, e're they take
 Their plummy voyage thro' the liquid sky.
 And now their rout design'd, their leaders chose,
 Their tribes adjusted, clean'd their vigorous wings, 800
 And many a circle, many a short essay
 Wheel'd round and round, in congregation full,
 The figur'd flight ascends; and, riding high
 Th' aerial billows, mixes with the clouds.

Or where the *Northern* ocean, in vast whirls, 805
 Boils round the naked, melancholy isles
 Of farthest *Thule*, and the *Atlantic* surge
 Pours in among the stormy *Hebrides*;
 Who can recount what transmigrations there
 Are annual made? What nations come and go? 810
 And how the living clouds on clouds arise?
 Infinite wings! till all the plume-dark air,
 And white resounding shore are one wild cry.

Here the plain, harmless native his small flock,
 And herd diminutive of many hues, 815
 Tends on the little island's verdant swell,
 The shepherd's sea-girt reign; or, to the rocks

Dire-

Dire-clinging, gathers his ovarious food;
 Or sweeps the fishy shore; or treasures up
 The plumage, rising full, to form the bed 820
 Of luxury. And here a while the muse,
 High-hovering o'er the broad cerulean scene,
 Sees *Caledonia* in romantick view:
 Her airy mountains, from the gelid main,
 Invested with a keen, diffusive sky, 825
 Breathing the soul acute; the forests huge,
 Incult, robust, and tall, by *Nature's* hand
 Planted of old; her azure lakes between,
 Pour'd out extensive, and of watry wealth
 Full; winding deep, and green, her fertile vales; 830
 With many a cool, translucent, brimming flood
 Wash'd lovely, from the *Tweed*, pure parent-stream,
 To where the north-inflated tempest foams
 O'er *Orca*, or *Betubium's* highest peak.
 Nurse of a people, in misfortune's school 835
 Train'd up to hardy deeds; soon visited
 By *Learning*, when before the *Gothic* rage
 he took her western flight. A generous race
 Of unsubmitting spirit, wise, and brave,
 Who still thro' bleeding ages struggled hard, 840
 To hold a hapless, undiminish'd state;

Too much in vain! Hence of ignoble bounds
 Impatient, and by tempting glory borne
 O'er every land, for every land their life
 Has flow'd profuse, their piercing genius plan'd, 845
 And swell'd the pomp of peace their faithful toil.
 As from their own clear north, in radiant streams,
 Bright over *Europe* bursts the *Boreal Morn*,

Oh is there not some patriot, in whose power
 That best, that godlike luxury is plac'd; 850
 Of blessing thousands, thousands yet unborn,
 Thro' late posterity? some, large of soul!
 To cheer dejected industry? to give
 A double harvest to the pining swain?
 And teach the labouring hand the sweets of toil? 855
 How, by the finest art, the native robe
 To weave; how, white as hyperborean snow,
 To form the lucid lawn; with venturous oar,
 How to dash wide the billow; nor look on,
 Shamefully passive, while *Batavian* fleets 860
 Defraud us of the glittering, finny swarms,
 That heave our friths, and croud upon our shores;
 How all enlivening trade to rouse, and wing
 The prosperous sail, from every growing port,

AUTUMN.

43

Unchalleng'd, round the sea-incircled globe;
And thus united *Britain Britain* make
Intire, th' imperial *Mistress* of the deep.

865

Yes, there are such. And full on thee, *Argyle*,
Her hope, her stay, her darling, and her boast,
From her first patriots, and her heroes sprung,
Thy fond, imploring country turns her eye:

870

In thee, with all a mother's triumph, sees
Her every virtue, every grace combin'd,
Her genius, wisdom, her politest turn,
Her pride of honour, and her courage try'd,
Calm, and intrepid, in the very throat
Of sulphurous war, on *Tenier's* dreadful field,
While thick around the deadly tempest flew.

875

And when the trumpet, kindling war no more,
Pours not the flaming squadrons o'er the field;
But, fruitful of fair deeds, and mutual faith,
Kind peace unites the jarring world again;
Let the deep olive thro' thy laurels twine.

880

For, powerful as thy sword, from thy rich tongue
Persuasion flows, and wins the high debate:
While mix'd in thee combine the charm of youth,
The force of manhood, and the depth of age.

885

Thee,

Thee, *Forbes*, too, whom every worth attends,
 As Truth sincere, as weeping Friendship kind,
 Thee, truly generous, and in silence great, 890
 Thy country feels thro' her reviving arts,
 Plan'd by thy wisdom, by thy soul inform'd;
 And seldom has she felt the friend like thee.

But see the fading many-colour'd woods,
 Shade deepening over shade, the country round 895
 Imbrown; a crowded umbrage, dusk, and dun,
 Of every hue, from wan, declining green
 To sooty dark. These now the lonesome muse,
 Low-whispering, lead into their leaf-strown walks,
 And give the *Season* in its latest view. 900

Mean-time, light-shadowing all, a sober calm
 Fleeces unbounded ether; whole least wave
 Stands tremulous, uncertain where to turn
 The gentle current: while illumin'd wide,
 The dewy-skirted clouds imbibe the sun, 905
 And thro' their uvid pores his temper'd force
 Shed o'er the peaceful world. Then is the time,
 For those whom Wisdom, and whom Nature charm,
 To steal themselves from the degenerate crowd,

And

AUTUMN.

45

And soar above this little scene of things;
To tread low-thoughted vice beneath their feet;
To sooth the throbbing passions into peace;
And woo lone *Quiet* in her silent walks.

910

Thus solitary, and in pensive guise,
Oft let me wander o'er the russet mead,
And thro' the sadden'd grove, where scarce is heard
One dying strain, to cheer the woodman's toil.
Haply some widow'd songster pours his plaint
Far, in faint warblings, thro' the tawny copse.
While congregated thrushes, linnets, larks,
And each wild throat, whose artless strains so late
Swell'd all the music of the swarming shades,
Robb'd of their tuneful soul, now shivering sit
On the dead tree, a dull, despondent flock!
With not a brightness waving o'er their plumes,
And nought save chattering discord in their note.
O let not, aim'd from some inhuman eye,
The gun the musick of the coming year
Destroy; and harmless, unsuspecting harm,
Lay the weak tribes, a miserable prey!
In mingled murder, fluttering on the ground.

915

920

925

930

The

90

895

900

905

a,

And

The pale, descending year, yet pleasing still,
 A gentler mood inspires; for now the leaf
 Incessant rustles from the mournful grove,
 Oft starting such as, studious, walk below, 935
 And slowly circles thro' the waving air.
 But should a quicker breeze amid the boughs
 Sob, o'er the sky the leafy ruin streams;
 Till choak'd, and matted with the dreary shower,
 The forest-walks, at every rising gale, 940
 Roll wide the wither'd waste, and whistle bleak.
 Fled is the blasted verdure of the fields;
 And, shrunk into their beds, the flowery race
 Their sunny robes resign. Even what remain'd
 Of bolder fruits falls from the naked tree; 945
 And woods, fields, gardens, orchards, all around
 The desolated prospect thrills the soul.

He comes! he comes! in every breeze the Power
 Of *philosophic Melancholy* comes!
 His near approach the sudden-starting tear, 950
 The glowing cheek, the mild dejected air,
 The soften'd feature, and the beating heart,
 Pierc'd deep with many a secret pang, declare.

O'er

AUTUMN.

47

O'er all his soul his sacred influence breaths ;
In all the bosom triumphs, all the nerves ; 955
Inflames imagination ; thro' the sense

935 Infuses every tendernefs ; and far
Beyond dim earth exalts the swelling thought.

Ten thousand thousand fleet ideas, such
As never mingled with the Vulgar's dream, 960
Croud fast into the mind's creative eye.

940 As fast the correspondent passions rise,
As varied, and as high : devotion rais'd
To rapture, and divine astonishment.

The love of Nature unconfin'd, and chief 965
Of human kind ; the large, ambitious wish,
To make them blest ; the sigh for suffering worth,

945 Lost in obscurity ; th' indignant scorn
Of mighty pride ; the fearless, great resolve ;

The wonder that the dying patriot draws, 970
Inspiring glory thro' remotest time ;

Th' arousing pant for virtue, and for fame ;
The sympathies of love, and friendship dear ;
950 With all the social offspring of the heart.

Oh bear me then to vast, embowering shades ! 975
To twilight groves, and visionary vales !

O'er To

To weeping grottoes, and prophetic glooms!
 Where angel-forms athwart the solemn dusk,
 Tremendous sweep, or seem to sweep along;
 And voices more than human, thro' the void 980
 Deep-sounding, seize the enthusiastic ear;

And now the western sun withdraws the day;
 And humid evening, gilding o'er the sky,
 In her chill progress, to the ground condens'd
 Th' ascending vapour throws. Where waters ooze, 985
 Where marshes stagnate, and where rivers wind,
 Cluster the rolling fogs, and swim along
 The dusky-mantled lawn. Mean-while the moon
 Full orb'd, and breaking thro' the scatter'd clouds,
 Shows her broad visage in the crimson'd east. 990
 Turn'd to the sun direct, her spotted disk,
 (Where mountains rise, umbrageous dales descend,
 And oceans roll, as optic tube descries)
 A lesser earth gives all his blaze again,
 Void of its flame, and sheds a softer day. 995
 Now thro' the passing cloud she seems to stoop,
 Now up the pure cerulean ride sublime.
 Wide the pale deluge floats; and streaming mild
 O'er the sky'd mountain to the shadowy vale,

While

While rocks, and floods reflect the quivering gleam, 1000
 The whole air whitens with a boundless tide
 Of silver radiance, trembling round the world.

But when, half-blotted from the sky, her light,
 Fainting, permits the starry fires to burn,
 With keener lustre thro' the depth of heaven; 1005
 Or quite extinct, her deaden'd orb appears,
 And scarce appears, of sickly, beamless white:
 Oft in this season, silent from the north
 A blaze of meteors shoots, ensweeping first
 The lower skies, then all at once converge 1010
 High to the crown of heaven, and all at once
 Relapsing quick, as quickly reascend,
 And mix, and thwart, extinguish, and renew,
 All ether coursing in a maze of light.

From look to look, contagious thro' the crowd, 1015
 The *Pannic* runs, and into wondrous shapes
 Th' appearance throws: armies in meet array,
 Throng with aerial spears, and steeds of fire;
 Till the long lines of full-extended war
 In bleeding fight commixt, the sanguine flood 1020
 Rows a broad slaughter o'er the plains of heaven.

As thus they scan the visionary scene,
 On all side swells the superstitious din,
 Incontinent; and busy frenzy talks
 Of blood and battle; cities over-turn'd, 1025
 And, late at night, in swallowing earthquake funk,
 Or painted hideous with ascending flame;
 Of fallow famine, inundation, storm;
 Of pestilence, and every great distress;
 Empires subvers'd, when ruling fate has struck 1030
 Th' unalterable hour: even Nature's self
 Is deem'd to totter on the brink of time.
 Not so the man of philosophic eye,
 And inspect sage; the waving brightness he
 Curious surveys, inquisitive to know 1035
 The causes, and materials, yet unfix'd,
 Of this appearance beautiful, and new.

Now black, and deep, the night begins to fall,
 A solid shade, immense. Sunk in the gloom
 Magnificent, and vast, are heaven and earth. 1040
 Order confounded lies; all beauty void;
 Distinction lost; and gay variety
 One universal blot: such the fair power
 Of Light, to kindle, and create the whole.

Drear

AUTUMN.

51

Drear is the state of the benighted wretch,
 Who then, bewilder'd, wanders thro' the dark,
 Full of pale fancies; and chimeras huge;
 Nor visited by one directive ray,
 From cottage streaming, or from airy hall.
 Perhaps impatient as he stumbles on,
 Struck from the root of slimy rushes; blue;
 The wild-fire scatters round, or gathered trails
 A length of flame deceitful o'er the moss;
 Whither decoy'd by the fantastic blaze,
 Now sunk and now renew'd, he's quite absorpt,
 Rider and horse into the miry gulph:
 While still, from day to day, his pining wife,
 And plaintive children his return await,
 In wild conjecture lost. At other times,
 Sent by the better Genius of the night,
 Innocuous, gleaming on the horse's mane,
 The meteor sits; and shews the narrow path,
 That winding leads thro' pits of death, or else
 Instructs him how to take the dangerous ford.

The lengthen'd night elaps'd, the morning shines
 Serene, in all her dewy beauty bright,
 Unfolding fair the last *Autumnal* day.

And now the mounting sun dispels the fog;
 The rigid hoar-frost melts before his beam,
 And hung on every spray, on every blade 1070
 Of grass, the myriad dew-drops twinkle round.

Ah see where robb'd, and murder'd, in that pit,
 Lies the still heaving hive; at evening snatch'd,
 Beneath the cloud of guilt-concealing night,
 And whelm'd o'er sulphur: while, undreaming ill, 1075
 The happy people, in their waxen cells,
 Sat tending publick cares, and planning schemes
 Of temperance, for winter poor; rejoic'd
 To mark, full-flowing round, their copious stores.
 Sudden the dark, oppressive steam ascends; 1080
 And, us'd to milder scents, the tender race,
 By thousands, tumble from their honey'd domes,
 Convolv'd, and agonizing in the dust.
 And was it then for this ye roam'd the spring,
 Intent from flower to flower? for this ye toil'd 1085
 Ceaseless the burning summer-heats away?
 For this in *Autumn* search'd the blooming waste,
 Nor lost one sunny gleam? for this sad fate?
 O man! tyrannic lord! how long, how long,
 Shall prostrate nature groan beneath your rage, 1090
 Awaiting

Awaiting renovation? When oblig'd,
 Must you destroy? of their ambrosial food
 Can you not borrow? and in just return,
 Afford them shelter from the wintry winds;
 Or, as the sharp year pinches, with their own 1095
 Again regale them on some smiling day?
 Hard by, the stony bottom of their town
 Looks desolate, and wild; with here and there
 A helpless number, who the ruin'd state
 Survive, lamenting weak, cast out to death. 1100
 Thus a proud city, populous, and rich,
 Full of the works of peace, and high in joy,
 At theatre, or feast, or sunk in sleep,
 (As late, *Palermo*, was thy fate) is seiz'd
 By some dread earthquake, and convulsive hurl'd, 1051
 Sheer from the black foundation, fench-involv'd,
 Into a gulph of blue, sulphureous flame.

Hence every harsher sight! for now the day,
 O'er heaven and earth diffus'd, grows warm, and high,
 Infinite splendor! wide investing all. 1110
 How still the breeze! save what the filmy threads
 Of dew evaporate brush from the plain.
 How clear the cloudless sky! how deeply ting'd

With a peculiar blue! th' ethereal arch
 How swell'd immense! amid whose azure thron'd 1115
 The radiant sun how gay! how calm below
 The gilded earth! the harvest-treasures all
 Now gather'd in, beyond the rage of storms,
 Sure to the swain; the circling fence shut up;
 And instant *Winter* bid to do his worst. 1120
 While loose to festive joy, the country round
 Laughs with the loud sincerity of mirth,
 Care shook away. The toil-invigorate youth,
 Not needing the melodious impulse much,
 Leaps wildly graceful, in the lively dance. 1125
 Her every charm abroad, the village-toast,
 Young, buxom, warm, in native beauty rich;
 Darts not-unmeaning looks; and, where her eye
 Points an approving smile, with double force,
 The cudgel rattles, and the struggle twists, 1130
 Age too shines out; and garrulous, recounts
 The feats of youth. Thus they rejoice; nor think
 That, with to-morrow's sun, their annual toil
 Begins again the never-ceasing round.

Oh knew he but his happiness, of men 1135
 The happiest he! who far from public rage,

Deep

Deep in the vale, with a choice few retir'd,
 Drinks the pure pleasures of the *rural life*.
 What tho' the dome be wanting, whose proud gate
 Each morning vomits out the sneaking crowd 1140
 Of flatterers false, and in their turn abus'd,
 Vile intercourse! What tho' the glittering robe,
 Of every hue reflected light can give,
 Or floating loose, or stiff with mazy gold,
 The pride, and gaze of fools! oppreſs him not, 1145
 What tho' from utmoſt land, and ſea, purvey'd,
 For him each rarer, tributary life
 Bleeds not, and his inſatiate table heaps
 With luxury, and death. What tho' his wine
 Flows not from brighter gems; nor ſunk in beds, 1150
 Oft of gay care, he toſſes out the night;
 Or, thoughtleſs, ſleeps at beſt in idle ſtate.
 What tho' depriv'd of theſe fantaſtic joys,
 That ſtill amuſe the wanton, ſtill deceive;
 A face of pleaſure, but a heart of pain; 1155
 Their hollow moments undelight'd all.
 Sure peace is his; a ſolid life, eſtrang'd
 To diſappointment, and fallacious hope;
 Rich in content, in Nature's bounty rich,
 In herbs, and fruits; whatever greens the *Spring*, 1160

When heaven descends in show'rs; or bends the bough,
 When *Summer* reddens, and when *Autumn* beams;
 Or in the *Wintry* glebe whatever lies
 Conceal'd, and fattens with the richest sap;
 These are not wanting; nor the milky drove, 1165
 Luxuriant, spread o'er all the lowing vale;
 Nor bleating mountains; nor the chide of streams,
 And hum of bees, inviting sleep sincere
 Into the guiltless breast, beneath the shade,
 Or thrown at large amid the fragrant hay: 1170
 Nor aught beside of prospect, grove, or long,
 Dim grottoes, gleaming lakes, and fountain clear.
 Here too lives simple truth; plain innocence;
 Unfully'd beauty; sound, unbroken youth,
 Patient of labour, with a little pleas'd, 1175
 Health ever-blooming; unambitious toils.
 Calm contemplation and poetic ease.

Let others brave the flood, in quest of gain,
 And beat, for joyless months, the gloomy wave.
 Let such as deem it glory to destroy, 1180
 Rush into blood; the sack of cities seek;
 Unpierc'd, exulting in the widow's wail,
 The virgin's shriek, and infant's trembling cry.

Let

Let some far-distant from their native soil,
Urg'd, or by want, or harden'd avarice,
Find other lands beneath another sun. 1185

Let This thro' cities work his ardent way,
By legal outrage, and establish'd guile,
The social sense extinct; and That ferment
Mad into tumult the seditious herd, 1190

Or melt them down to slavery. Let These
Insnare the wretched in the toils of law,
Fomenting discord, and perplexing right,
An iron race! and those of fairer front,
But equal inhumanity, in courts, 1195

And slippery pomp delight, in dark cabals;
Wreath the deep bow, diffuse the lying smile,
And tread the weary labyrinth of state.
While He, from all the stormy passions free,
That restless men involve, hears, and but hears, 1200
At distance safe, the human tempest roar,

Wrapt close in conscious peace. The fall of kings,
The rage of nations, and the crush of states
Move not the man, who, from the world escap'd,
In still retreats, and flowery solitudes, 1205

To Nature's voice attends, from day to day,
And month to month, thro' the revolving Year;
Ad-

Admiring sees her in her every shape :
 Feels all her fine emotions at his heart ;
 Takes what she liberal gives, nor thinks of more. 1210
 He when young *Spring* protrudes the bursting gems,
 Marks the first bud, and sucks the healthful gale
 Into his freshen'd soul ; her genial hours
 He quite enjoys ; and not a beauty blows,
 And not an opening blossom breathes in vain. 1215
 In *Summer* he, beneath the living shade,
 Such as from frigid *Tempe* wont to fall,
 Or *Hemus* cool, reads what the muse, of these
 Perhaps, has in immortal numbers sung ;
 Or what she dictates writes ; and, oft an eye 1220
 Shot round, rejoices in the vigorous year.
 When *Autumn's* yellow lustre gilds the world,
 And tempts the fickle swain into the field,
 Seiz'd by the general joy, his heart distends
 With gentle throws ; and thro' the tepid gleams 1225
 Deep-musing, then the best exerts his song.
 Even *Winter* wild to him is full of bliss.
 The mighty tempest, and the hoary waste,
 Abrupt, and deep, stretch'd o'er the bury'd earth,
 Awake to solemn thought. At night the skies, 1230
 Disclos'd, and kindled, by refining frost,

Pour

Pour every lustre on th' astonish'd eye.

A friend, a book, the stealing hours secure,

And mark them down for wisdom. With swift wing,

O'er land, and sea, imagination roams; 1235

Or truth, divinely breaking on his mind,

Elates his being, and unfolds his powers;

Or in his breast heroic virtue burns.

The touch of love, and kindred too he feels,

The modest eye, whose beams on his alone 1240

Extatic shine; the little, strong embrace

Of prattling children, twin'd around his neck,

And emulous to please him, calling forth

The fond parental soul. Nor purpose gay,

Amusement, dance, or song, he sternly scorns; 1245

For happiness, and true philosophy

Still are, and have been of the smiling kind.

This is the life which those who fret in guilt,

And guilty cities, never knew; the life,

Led by primæval ages, incorrupt, 1250

When God himself, and Angels dwelt with men!

Oh Nature! all-sufficient! over all!

Enrich me with the knowledge of thy works!

Snatch me to heaven; thy rolling wonders there,

World

World beyond world, in infinite extent, 1255
 Profusely scatter'd o'er the void immense,
 Shew me; their motions, periods, and their laws,
 Give me to scan; thro' the disclosing deep
 Light my blind way: the mineral *Strata* there;
 Thrust, blooming, thence the vegetable world; 1260
 O'er that rising system, more complex,
 Of animals; and higher still, the mind,
 The varied scene of quick-compounded thought,
 And where the mixing passions endless shift;
 These ever open to my ravish'd eye; 1264
 Search, the flight of time can ne'er exhaust!
 But if to that unequal, if, the blood,
 In sluggish streams about my heart, forbids
 That best ambition; under closing shades,
 Inglorious, lay me by the lowly brook. 1270
 And whisper to my dreams. From *Thee* begin,
 Dwell all on *Thee*, with *Thee* conclude my song;
 And let me never, never stray from *Thee*!

The End.